

Remarks

The present application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated July 13, 2007. By the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 3, 16 and 20-21 are amended, and claims 4, 5 and 8 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-14 and 16-21 are pending after the amendments. No new matter is added by the amendments, and supports for the amendments can be found from throughout the specification, drawings, and claims as originally filed. For example, the start information setting algorithm to be executed with the microcontroller, as recited in claims 3 and 21 as amended, are described and illustrated in paragraphs [00039]-[00046] and FIGS. 6A and 6B.

Claims 1-14 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Prabhu et al. (US 7,019,778). Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Prabhu et al. (US 7,019,778) in view of Safai et al. (US 6,167,469).

Independent claims 1, 16 and 20 are amended by the foregoing amendments in order to better highlight novel aspects of the present invention in view of the references. As detailed herein below, Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims as amended, namely claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-14 and 16-21, are patentable over the cited references of record. Reconsideration of the Office Action is earnestly requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Discussion of Claims 1-3, 6-7 and 9-14

The present invention as claimed is particularly directed to setting a start information signal of an electronic camera without utilizing an external computer which typically includes a specific application program for downloading and setting up the start information signal, such as a start image and start sound, which is to be reproduced as initial display information when the power of the camera is turned on.

Applicants respectfully submit that Prabhu et al. is not related to this start information setting feature of the claimed invention, namely, to setting a start information signal of an electronic camera without utilizing an external computer. In contrast, Prabhu et al. merely discloses a method for customizing a digital camera for at least one particular user with an external computer having a specific application program for downloading, customizing and setting up the firmware components of the camera.

Moreover, Prabhu et al. fails to disclose or teach, among others, the following limitations of claims 1-3, 6-7 and 9-14 as amended (see independent claim 1):

wherein the camera comprises a menu option coupled with a user input unit provided in the camera, the menu option and the user input unit enabling a user to select and set up a start information signal through the display unit from the information signals stored in the rewritable memory of the camera without connecting the camera to an external computer for setting the start information signal. (Emphasis added.)

In this regard, the Examiner alleges that Prabhu et al. discloses this claimed feature, as column 14, lines 22-29, suggests that "the user selects their name or start information signal at startup by selecting from the menu and the processor selects the appropriate features to display to the user on the GUI" and that "the startup information signals and firmware settings are saved in the Flash EPROM 28 and the camera is not connected to a computer to set the signals at startup". See Office Action, the bottom half on Page 2.

Applicants, however, respectfully disagree. Prabhu et al., column 14, lines 22-29, recites: "When the digital camera 10 is powered on, a list of users is displayed on the image display 22 and the user selects their name using the camera user interface 24. In response to this user input, the processor 18 uses the appropriate firmware components or firmware settings stored in the Flash EPROM 28 to provide the

customized camera GUI and feature set for that particular user." (Emphasis added.) As recited clearly, this disclosure suggests a mere selection of one user's name among multiple user names, and thus, is not related to the claimed feature of setting the start information signal via the use of the menu option and the user input unit, in which the selection and setting up the start information signal is from the information signals stored in the rewritable memory of the camera without connecting the camera to an external computer for setting the start information signal. The selection of one particular user's name has no bearings on the claimed feature of selecting and setting a start information signal (to be reproduced at startup of the camera) via the use of the menu option and the user input unit provided in the camera and without ever using an external computer.

Furthermore, Prabhu et al. fails to disclose or teach, among others, the following limitations of claims 1-3, 6-7 and 9-14 as amended:

wherein the start information signal includes a start image and a start sound to be selected from information stored in the rewritable memory of the camera, the menu option and the user input unit further enabling the user to record a sound, the sound recorded being stored in the rewritable memory, and further enabling the user to select the sound recorded as the start sound of the camera. (Emphasis added).

Prabhu et al. discloses a method for customizing a digital camera for at least one particular user. However, as detailed below, Prabhu et al. fails to disclose or teach, among others, at least the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention.

In particular, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the use of the menu option and the user input unit which enables the user to record a sound for using as the start information signal and by which the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit is stored in the rewritable memory

for later use as the start information signal, as is required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention.

Moreover, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the use of the menu option and the user input unit which further enables the user to select the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit as the start sound of the camera, as is further required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention. These novel features of the claimed invention are entirely missing in the Prabhu et al. disclosure.

The Examiner alleges that Prabhu et al., column 12, lines 7-10, discloses the camera allowing recording of a new sound to be usable as a start information signal. See Office Action, page 5, lines 3-5. However, this disclosure merely suggests the use of camera customization software executed by CPU 50 of an external computer, which may optionally provide a feature configuring the firmware stored in the Flash EPROM 28 of the camera in order to add unique sounds to the camera, such as funny noises as pictures are taken. However, this sound recording function disclosed in Prabhu et al. does not have any bearing on the claimed feature of setting a start information signal of the camera, such as a start sound, which is to be reproduced when power of the camera is on. Moreover, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the recorded sound is to be stored in a rewritable memory of the camera for later selection (via the use of the menu option and the user input unit) as the start sound of the camera at starts up of the camera, as is required by the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Prabhu et al. clearly fails to disclose or teach, among others, the above-identified limitations of the invention.

In view of the foregoing, claims 1-3, 6-7 and 9-14 as amended are patentable over Prabhu et al. under either 35 U.S.C. 102(e) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Discussion of Claims 20-21

As stated above, claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Prabhu et al. (US 7,019,778) in view of Safai et al. (US 6,167,469). Independent claim 20 is amended by the foregoing amendments to further highlight novel aspects of the invention, including additional limitations similar to those recited in previous claim 21 before amendment.

As claimed, the present invention as claimed in claims 20-21 is particularly directed to setting a start information signal of an electronic camera without utilizing an external computer in which the computer includes a specific application program for downloading and setting up the start information signal, such as a start image and start sound, which is to be reproduced as initial display information when the power of the camera is turned on. As discussed above, Prabhu et al. is not related to this start information setting feature of the invention as claimed. In contrast with the claimed invention, Prabhu et al. merely discloses a method for customizing a digital camera for at least one particular user with an external computer having a specific application program for downloading, customizing and setting up the firmware components of the camera.

Moreover, Prabhu et al. fails to disclose or teach, among others, the following limitations of claims 20-21 as amended (see independent claim 20):

a menu option coupled with the user input unit of the camera, the menu option and the user input unit enabling a user to select and set up a start information signal to be reproduced when power is applied, said selecting and setting up to be performed through the display unit without connecting the camera to an external computer for selecting, configuring, customizing or setting up the start information signal by the external computer, the start information signal including a start image and a start sound to be selected from

information stored in the flash memory of the camera and in the memory card of the user;

the menu option and the user input unit further enabling the user to record a sound, the sound recorded being stored in the flash memory, and further enabling the user to select the sound recorded as the start sound of the camera. (Emphasis added).

Prabhu et al. (US 7,019,778) discloses a method for customizing a digital camera for at least one particular user. As detailed below, Prabhu et al., however, fails to disclose or teach, among others, at least the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention.

With respect to the latter one of the above-identified limitations of claims 20-21, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the use of the menu option and the user input unit which enables the user to record a sound for using as the start information signal *and* by which the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit is stored in the flash memory for later use as the start information signal, as is required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention.

Moreover, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the use of the menu option and the user input unit which further enables the user to select the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit as the start sound of the camera, as is further required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention. These novel features of the claimed invention are entirely missing in the Prabhu et al. disclosure.

The Examiner acknowledges that the Prabhu et al. reference does not disclose wherein the menu option and the user input unit further enables the user to record a

sound. The Examiner further indicates that the limitation stating “the sound can be stored in the flash memory and selectable as the start sound of the camera” is expressed as being optional and not a required feature, therefore, it is not required to be disclosed by the prior art. See Office Action, page 9 at Item 5.

This optional feature as appeared in the previous claims 20-21 was amended by the foregoing amendments, and is now a required limitation of the claims. Applicants submit that this limitation is not disclosed by Prabhu et al. as discussed above.

As discussed above, Prabhu et al., column 12, lines 7-10, discloses an optional sound recording function of the camera. However, this disclosure merely suggests the use of the camera customization software executed by CPU 50 of an external computer, which may optionally provide configuring the firmware stored in the Flash EPROM 28 of the camera in order to add unique sounds to the camera, such as funny noises as pictures are taken. Applicants respectfully submit that this sound recording disclosed in Prabhu et al. has no bearing to the claimed feature of setting a start information signal, such as a start sound, which is to be reproduced when power of the camera is on. Moreover, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the recorded sound is to be stored in a flash memory of the camera for later selection (via the use of the menu option and the user input unit) as the start sound of the camera at starts up of the camera, as is required by the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Prabhu et al. clearly fails to disclose or teach, among others, the latter one of the above-identified limitations of the invention as claimed in claims 20-21.

With respect to the former one of the above-identified limitations of claims 20-21, the Prabhu et al. disclosure clearly utilizes an external computer connected to the camera and for configuring or customizing the firmware settings of the camera by a customization software of the external computer. Therefore, Prabhu et al. fails to

disclose or teach, among others, the former one of the above-identified limitations of the invention as claimed in claims 20-21.

Safai et al. (US 6,167,469), on the other hand, is cited by the Examiner as a secondary reference to reject claim 21 (in the previous form) by combining with the primary reference Prabhu et al. discussed above. In this regard, the Examiner alleges that Safai et al. discloses a camera wherein the menu option and the user input unit further enables the user to record a sound (see column 11, lines 27-60). See Office Action, page 9 at Item 5.

Applicants, however, respectfully submit that, similar to Prabhu et al., Safai et al. also fails to disclose or teach, among others, each and every one of the above-identified limitations of the invention as claimed in claims 20-21.

Similar to Prabhu et al., Safai et al. also fails to disclose or teach, among others, at least the latter one of above-identified limitations of claims 20-21. Nowhere in the Safai et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the claimed feature of using the menu option and the user input unit which enables the user to record a sound for using as the start information signal which (i.e., the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit) is stored in the flash memory for later use as the start information signal.

Moreover, nowhere in the Safai et al. disclosure suggests or teaches the claimed feature of using the menu option and the user input unit which further enables the user to select the sound recorded via the use of the menu option and the user input unit as the start sound of the camera. As is the same with Prabhu et al., these novel features of the claimed invention are entirely missing in the Safai et al. disclosure as well.

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, claims 20-21 as amended are patentable over the combination of Prabhu et al. and Safai et al. under either 35 U.S.C. 102(e) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Discussion of Claims 16-19

As stated above, method claims 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Prabhu et al. (US 7,019,778) discussed above. Independent claim 16 is amended by the foregoing amendments to further highlight novel aspects of the invention, including certain additional limitations as newly added thereto.

As claimed, the present invention as claimed in claims 16-19 is particularly directed to a method of operating a digital camera which is capable of reproducing, at startup of the camera, a start information signal that can be set up by the user without utilizing an external computer for setting the start information signal. Applicants submit that Prabhu et al. is not related to this start information setting feature of the invention as claimed in claims 16-19 in which the start information signal to be reproduced at startup of the camera is set up without utilizing an external computer.

Moreover, Prabhu et al. fails to disclose or teach, among others, the following limitations of claims 16-19 as amended (see independent claim 16):

setting up a start information signal with a user input unit coupled with a menu option for setting the start information signal, said setting-up the start information signal being performed, through execution of a start information setting algorithm with a microcontroller of the camera and without ever connecting the camera to an external computer for selecting, configuring, customizing or setting the start information signal by the external computer, by selecting desirable start information from a group consisting of a sound data

recorded or inputted by the user, image data stored in the memory medium,
sound data stored in a flash memory of the camera, and image data stored in
the flash memory. (Emphasis added).

First, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches setting up of a start information signal with a user input unit coupled with a menu option for setting the start information signal, said setting-up the start information signal being performed through execution of a start information setting algorithm with a microcontroller of the camera and without ever connecting the camera to an external computer for selecting, configuring, customizing or setting the start information signal by the external computer, which is required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention. To the contrary, Prabhu et al. merely discloses a method for customizing a digital camera for at least one particular user with an external computer having a specific application program for downloading, customizing and setting up the firmware components of the camera.

Moreover, nowhere in the Prabhu et al. disclosure suggests or teaches setting up of a start information signal with a user input unit coupled with a menu option for setting the start information signal, said setting-up the start information signal being performed by selecting desirable start information from a group consisting of a sound data recorded or inputted by the user, image data stored in the memory medium, sound data stored in a flash memory of the camera, and image data stored in the flash memory, which is further required by the above-identified limitations of the claimed invention.

In this regard, the Examiner alleges that Prabhu et al. discloses this feature as column 14, lines 22-29, suggests "the user selects their name or start information signal at startup by selecting from the menu and the processor selects the desired GUI image to display from the Flash EPROM 28". See Office Action, page 3, lines 4-7.

Applicants, however, respectfully traverse. Prabhu et al., column 14, lines 22-29, recites: "When the digital camera 10 is powered on, a list of users is displayed on the image display 22 and the user selects their name using the camera user interface 24. In response to this user input, the processor 18 uses the appropriate firmware components or firmware settings stored in the Flash EPROM 28 to provide the customized camera GUI and feature set for that particular user." (Emphasis added.) This disclosure suggests mere selection of one user's name among multiple users, Thus, it is not related to the claimed feature of setting a start information signal (which signal is to be reproduced at startup of the camera) with a user input unit coupled with a menu option, and particularly, by selecting desirable start information from a group consisting of a sound data recorded or inputted by the user, image data stored in the memory medium, sound data stored in a flash memory of the camera, and image data stored in the flash memory.

Accordingly, Prabhu et al. clearly fails to disclose or teach, among others, the above-identified limitations of the invention as claimed in claims 16-19. Therefore, claims 16-19 as amended are patentable over Prabhu et al.

Applicants submit that Safai et al. (US 6,167,469) is not related to the setting of a start information signal with a user input unit coupled with a menu option, and Safai et al. also fails to disclose or teach, among others, each and every one of the above-identified limitations of the invention as claimed in claims 16-19.

Accordingly, Applicants further submit that claims 16-19 as amended are patentable over the combination of Prabhu et al. and Safai et al. under either 35 U.S.C. 102(e) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and above remarks, Applicants submit that all of the pending claims of the present application, namely Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-14 and 16-21 as amended, are patentable over the references of record and in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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